

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 12925

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PEPR, EG, KS, US
SUBJECT: ROK CONGEN'S REQUEST FOR U.S. INTERCESSION WITH
- GOE RE ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

1. AMBASSADOR YONG-HUN HAHN, ROK CONGEN, CALLED TODAY AT HIS REQUEST. HIS PURPOSE WAS TO ASK FOR MY INTERCESSION WITH APPROPRIATE HIGH-LEVEL GOE AUTHORITIES TO URGE THAT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BE ESTABLISHED WITH ROK.

2. ACCORDING TO HAHN, HE HAS FOR PAST TWO YEARS BEEN URGING GOE TO AGREE TO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. HIS DEMARCHES HAVE BEEN MADE TO MFA UNDERSEC SALAH HASSAN (WHOSE JURISDICTION INCLUDES EAST ASIA) AND ONCE OR TWICE WITH FORMER MINSTATE MOHAMED RIAD. SO LONG AS FORMER FONMIN FAHMY WAS IN OFFICE, THERE WAS NEVER ANY REPLY. HAHN'S LAST PROPOSAL WAS MADE IN OCTOBER, 1977, TO UNDERSEC HASSAN. IT NOTED ROK HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH 103 COUNTRIES, WHILE NORTH KOREA HAS RELATIONS WITH ONLY 96. SOME 53 COUNTRIES HAVE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH BOTH SOUTH AND NORTH KOREA. ON THIS BASIS, HAHN ARGUED, GOE SHOULD REDRESS CURRENT INEQUITY BY AGREEING TO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK. SINCE GOE HAD IN PAST ASKED FOR ROK ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT, WHICH HAHN SAYS ROK UNABLE PROVIDE, HIS PROPOSAL SUGGESTED GOE SEND ECONOMIC MISSION
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TO SOUTH KOREA TO STUDY ECONOMIC SITUATION AND POSSIBILITY OF MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL ECONOMIC EXCHANGES.

3. THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY TO THAT PROPOSAL, HAHN SAYS, UNTIL LAST WEEK WHEN UNDERSEC HASSAN ASKED HIM IF IT WAS STILL VALID. WHEN HAHN SAID IT WAS, HASSAN INDICATED HIS INTENTION OF SUBMITTING A DEPARTMENTAL PAPER TO HIS

SUPERIORS SUGGESTING TIME MAY HAVE COME TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK. THAT PAPER SHOULD HAVE GONE TO MINSTATE BOUTROS GHALI LAST WEEKEND, BUT HAHN DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER IT HAS IN FACT BEEN SENT UP. ON ASSUMPTION THAT IT HAS AND THAT SUBJECT IS NOW BEING STUDIED AT HIGHER LEVEL, HE ASKED IF I WOULD SAY A WORD TO FONMIN KAMEL, VP MUBARAK AND PERHAPS EVEN PRESIDENT SADAT ABOUT DESIRABILITY OF GOE ESTABLISHING SUCH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK.

4. I TOLD HAHN THAT I HAD SEVERAL TIMES OVER THE PAST FOUR AND A HALF YEARS RAISED THE SUBJECT WITH EGYPTIANS. I HAD RECEIVED TWO ANSWERS. FAHMY USUALLY INDICATED AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, BUT CLAIMED TIME NOT YET RIGHT. MOREOVER, GOE WOULD EXPECT TO EXTRACT PRICE OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (E.G., SHIPBUILDING FOR EGYPT) FOR SUCH POLITICAL ACTION. (HAHN INTERVENED AT THIS POINT TO SAY THAT ROK REFUSES TO PAY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PRICE FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.) SECOND CONCERN HAD USUALLY BEEN EXPRESSED ABOUT POSSIBLE ADVERSE NORTH KOREAN REACTION. SINCE SOVIET CUT-OFF OF SPARE PARTS, GOE HAS DESPERATELY LOOKED AROUND FOR ALTERNATIVE SOURCES AND NORTH KOREA HAS BEEN ONE SUCH SOURCE. HENCE, I HAVE BEEN GIVEN TO UNDERSTAND GAMASY WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF DOING ANYTHING THAT MIGHT UPSET NORTH KOREANS. I HAD NOT DISCUSSED SUBJECT FOR AT LEAST YEAR AND A HALF AND COULD NOT

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THEREFORE SAY HOW PRESENT EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES VIEW SITUATION. SUBJECT WASHINGTON'S APPROVAL, HOWEVER, I WOULD BE WILLING SOUND OUT KAMEL AND MUBARAK ON THIS MATTER. HAHN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION.

5. HE ALSO STATED THAT HIS RELATIONS WITH GOE OFFICIALDOM HAVE STEADILY IMPROVED. IN PAST SEVERAL MONTHS, FOR EXAMPLE, GOE HAS PERMITTED HIM ESTABLISH AN EGYPTIAN/ROK FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY. ON ECONOMIC FRONT, GOE HAS AGREED TO JOINT VENTURE BANKING OPERATION BETWEEN BANQUE DU CAIRE AND SOUTH KOREAN BANK. FINAL DOCUMENT IS TO BE SIGNED THIS EVENING.

6. COMMENT: I HAVE SPOKEN TO EGYPTIANS IN THE PAST ON THIS MATTER, BUT WITH LIMITED RESULTS. MAJOR INHIBITION, I WAS REGULARLY TOLD, IS NORTH KOREAN SUPPLY OF MILITARY SPARE PARTS. DO NOT KNOW WHETHER SITUATION HAS ALTERED SUFFICIENTLY FOR GOE TO HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART, BUT IT IS INTERESTING THAT MFA DEPT IS NOW WILLING TAKE INITIATIVE IN RAISING MATTER. UNLESS DEPT HAS OBJECTIONS, I WOULD PROPOSE TO MAKE LOW-KEY DEMARCHE TO KAMEL AND PERHAPS MUBARAK ON DESIRABILITY OF GOE ESTABLISH-

ING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK. EILTS

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